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## 'MINISTERING ANGELS' SUBJECT OF SERMON BY DR. GOODSPEED

Noted Oakland Divine's Dis-  
course One of Greatest  
Heard Here

Following is a sermon preached in  
Honolulu by the (Rev. F. L. Good-  
speed of Oakland, which has been  
considered one of the greatest ever  
heard from a local pulpit. By request  
the Star-Bulletin publishes it in its  
entirety.

### MINISTERING ANGELS

By THE REV. F. L. GOODSPEED.  
Are they not all ministering spir-  
its, sent forth to do service for the  
sake of them that shall inherit sal-  
vation?—Heb. 1:14.

Writing his argument concerning  
the superiority of the Son over all  
angels, the author of this great  
epistle to the Hebrews is neverthe-  
less careful to show that though he  
is superior, the angels are in His ser-  
vice, and in the service of His saints.  
The literatures of all nations are full  
of suggestions of angels. Every peo-  
ple on earth in their darkness have  
seen white forms and heard the  
rustle of wings and felt the breath  
of swift spirits upon the cheek.

"How oft do their silver bowers  
leave,

To come to succor us that succor  
want!

How oft do they with golden pin-  
ions cleave

The glittering skies, like flying  
pursuivants,

Against foul fiends to aid us  
in militant;

They for us fight; they watch and  
duty ward

And their bright squadrons  
about us plant;

And all for love and nothing for  
reward.

Oh, why should heavenly God to  
men have such regard?"

The Bible is full of the idea of an-  
gelic ministries, spiritual presences,  
and radiant leaderships. Angels are  
mentioned in the Old Testament one  
hundred and seven times and in the  
New Testament one hundred and sev-  
enty-five times. You might as well  
have a world without flowers, or a  
night without stars, as a Bible with-  
out angels, for the subject runs from  
end to end of the Book of books; it  
forms an integral part of its his-  
tory, from the earliest creation,

"when the morning stars sang to-  
gether and all the sons of God shout-  
ed for joy," to the close of the vision  
of Patmos, when John was about to  
fall down and worship the angel who  
had disclosed to him glorious visions  
of the spiritual world. The tendency  
of modern thought is to exalt the ma-  
terial. The only thing considered  
real is that which you can see and  
count and handle and measure. But  
angelic ministry is a thing unseen,  
not apprehended, except in rare in-  
stances, by the bodily senses. It is  
nevertheless real. The revelation of  
such angelic ministrations tells us of  
beings constantly active among the  
affairs of men, working in harmony  
with the laws of nature, beings unre-  
stricted by earthly limitations, of  
whose presence the world is not cog-  
nizant, but through whose agency  
God delivers and ministers to his  
people, bringing the schemes and  
calculations of the wicked to naught,  
as he did long ago the designs of  
the Assyrian monarch and the wicked  
plans of Herod the king.

What the Age Needs.

What this age needs, perhaps,  
more than anything else is a spiri-  
tual imagination. It needs to get  
away from the Sadducean philosophy.  
Angels and angel ministries are real.  
Jacob saw them in a dream, but a  
little later he saw them actually, a  
great host of them at Mahanaim, the  
place of hosts. They came to Elijah  
under the juniper tree. They com-  
forted Elisha. They carried the dead  
beggar to Paradise. An angel re-  
leased Peter from prison. Angels  
were active at the coming and all  
through the ministry of Christ. They  
were curious concerning the mystery  
of the incarnation. They supported  
him in the wilderness. They relieved  
him in Gethsemane. They guard-  
ed his grave. They traced his as-  
cension. They instructed his dis-  
ciples. They defended his apostles.  
Why do we not see them? There  
are two reasons among others. Doubt  
cannot see them—and fullness of  
faith does not need them. Signs are  
of no use to unbelieving hearts—and  
to the man of faith they are not nec-  
essary.

Angels are the messengers of twi-  
light. Midnight doubt can not see  
them, and noonday faith does not re-  
quire them. But their activity is in-  
disputable. They watch, they sug-  
gest, they guard, they serve.

"Are they not all ministering spir-  
its sent forth to minister?" Pity me,  
if you will, call it a childish ignor-  
ance, a fancy, a superstition. But I  
believe that if we could see, we  
should discover that under the lord-  
ship of Christ angels are watching  
and listening, ascending and descend-  
ing, coming into close union with us,  
guarding us in many a place of doubt  
and danger and peril.

Science Blunts Sensitiveness.

Scientific investigation and mater-  
ialism have blunted our sensitiveness  
to the forces of the unseen world. To  
idealize the world and life is one of  
the offices of religion. There is no  
more reason that we should surren-  
der our faith in angels than our faith  
in God. Our faith is always truer  
than our skepticism, because the be-  
lieving man is the only avenue  
through which God can speak and  
act. We have never seen angels—but  
we have never seen God! We have  
never seen our departed friends! There  
is no possible harm in listening to  
the songs of the supernatural group  
poised in the cloudbank above Beth-  
lehem. There is a real ministry to-  
ward white as snow with the sorrows

life in the faith that our poor world  
is beautifully and gloriously sur-  
rounded. To the end of time men  
will rejoice to hear the echo of the  
angelic cohorts, as they roll their  
hosannas out of the midnight sky,  
singing peace on earth, good will to  
men. Poetry is truer than prose, and  
poetry says:

"Hand in hand with angels through  
the world we go."

But while I have not the least doubt  
of the existence and blessed services  
of these heavenly ministers, it is of  
some other angels that I wish to  
speak today.

Laws Good Angels.

I remark, in the first place, that  
the Laws of the Universe are good  
angels. They are God's face unvel-  
led. They are pledges of His infinite  
and constant care. They are the se-  
cret of His infinite heart written  
upon the universe. They are a copy  
of the Eternal Mind, a transcript of  
the divine nature. God has given us  
a universe that can be counted on  
and trusted, and because law is the  
revelation of the Most High, an ex-  
pression of the original idea of truth  
and good existing in his mind from  
eternity, therefore, the mission of law  
is a beneficent one. When man seems  
to fall he falls into the Everlasting  
Arms, for God is never outside His  
laws. A loving will is the foundation  
and guide of all the forces within and  
about our life. The poet of divinity  
has well said:

"All's law, yet all's love."

The severities of the universe are the  
severities of love. Pain is the mercil-  
ful and forceful protest of a violated  
law. Nerves are warnings of ap-  
proaching disaster. Every pain is a  
danger signal, telling you that it is  
time to stop, a merciful note of warn-  
ing of coming calamity. Every law  
is an expression of God's kindness;  
every law is a good Samaritan, knit-  
ting up the ravaged sleeve of care,  
and restoring the wounded. Were  
all these laws observed, ignorance  
would disappear, sorrow would be un-  
known, disease would be banished—  
and the very ribs of death would have  
beneath them a throbbing heart of  
life. Sometimes the wheels seem to  
be jagged, sometimes these laws made  
for the regulation of the universe  
seem cruel and unyielding in their ac-  
tion, but the wise man can detect a  
lesson of wisdom and of worth any-  
where in the universe, for the uni-  
verse is a unit, and in each single  
thing the whole body of divine enact-  
ment is reflected. A providence is  
not a piece of broken crystal under-  
neath whose fragments there abides  
no law of form. A swinging lamp  
means nothing until a man called  
Galileo had eyes to see its inward  
meaning—then he beholds the angel  
of the law of movement. A falling  
apple means nothing except a Newton  
law until he sees that it teaches the  
beneficent force which holds the uni-  
verse together, reading beneath it the  
law of order and harmony throughout  
all the works of God.

Ministerial in Aspect.

Rightly understood, this great crea-  
tion, with its law and system and  
organization, becomes ministerial in  
its aspect. Our angels are not ban-  
ished, but our conceptions are en-  
larged. We do not wait for some ce-  
lestial beings to direct our steps and  
hold us in their hands, for God has  
given us a better understanding of  
his universe, and now the flame that  
leaps up from our hearts, the wind  
that beats in our faces, and the stars  
that shine in the sky, the forces that  
throb everywhere, are all representa-  
tives of Him who planned the whole,  
are all ministering spirits and mes-  
sengers of God bringing to us the  
secrets of perpetual health and life  
and power.

Hope an Angel.

Hope is one of God's angels.

"Oh, what were life,  
Even in the warm and summer light  
of joy.

Without those hopes that, like re-  
freshing gales,

At evening from the sea, come o'er  
the soul,

Breathed from the ocean of eter-  
nity!"

Faith looks upward. Hope looks for-  
ward. Faith rests everything on God.  
Hope expects everything from God.  
Faith is sure that God will do right.  
Hope is confident that God will send  
good. Hope is divinely called "an an-  
chor of the soul," an "anchor both  
sure and steadfast, and entering into  
that which is within the veil." If we  
slip that cable, if we lose that an-  
chor, we are like a drifting ship, and  
we deprive ourselves of all the good  
promised to those of the trusting soul  
and the clinging heart. "Where there  
is no hope, there can be no endeavor,"  
says Dr. Johnson. And Coleridge tells  
us that—

"Word without hope draws nectar in  
a sieve."

Words of hope are like gleams of  
mercy flashing far across the gloom  
of guilt. The voice of hope is like  
the sound of rescuers sending their  
word of cheer far over the sea. The  
way to save a man is to get him to  
hope again.

"Men might be better if we better  
deemed  
Of them. The worst way to improve  
the world  
is to condemn it. Men may overget  
Delusion—not despair."

An English artist, Mr. Watts, has  
a famous picture called "The Death  
of Cain." The world's first murderer  
lies on the rock dying, his mighty  
limbs weakened by famine, and his  
sorrow.

and punishments for his sin. The  
rock upon which he lies is a neglected  
altar, weed-grown and dismantled,  
the old altar of his slain brother, to  
which he has dragged his weary body  
and upon which he is offering all he  
has to offer, the despairing sacrifice  
of his own wretched self. But above  
him pleads his angel, thrusting her  
face into the angry and stormy heav-  
ens, and pleading not in vain, for the  
storm has spent its fury, the light-  
ning grows feebler in the distance,  
and through the lurid threatening of  
the tempest a beam of mercy gleams  
down upon the head of the aged mur-  
derer.

Sermon of Picture.

The mighty sermon of the picture  
is that without reparation and res-  
titution, without the sacrifice of self,  
wretched though self may be, it is  
impossible to please God. In an-  
other picture the artist has given us  
a representative of Hope, to teach us  
the sin and folly of despair. Needed  
on earth more than anywhere else,  
she is seated on the world. As Hope  
must walk by faith and not by sight,  
the artist has represented her as  
blind. Holding in her hand a harp  
with every string broken save one,  
she is listening intently to its music,  
for, if that one string snaps, earth  
will hold no music more. We can  
get music even from one string, if  
that string is hope. It is a lesson  
deeply needed by this sad world of  
ours. It teaches that despair is sin.  
Pagan mythology had its Pandora's  
box, but Christianity has its great  
gospel of hope by which it pours  
fresh glory over all the works of God  
and reveals forecasts and dim sug-  
gestions of those unimaginable scenes  
and melodies which neither eye hath  
seen nor ear heard. May God give  
us all accuracy and fineness of vision  
to behold that if we are prisoners, we  
are prisoners of hope within the  
stronghold of our Heavenly Father;  
and to see the safety of His people  
until they come at last to the land of  
far distances.

I remark again that Work is an  
angel. The primeval curse, "In the  
sweat of thy face shalt thou eat  
bread," is one of man's dearest bless-  
ings. Even Eden before the fall was  
a place of toil. In spotless innocence  
Adam was commanded to dress the  
garden and keep it. Not man's male-  
diction, but man's benediction, is la-  
bor. Even Christ said, "My Father  
worketh hitherto and I work." The  
lazy man is a caricature of the Al-  
mighty. Behind the most prosaic life  
there is an angel form for those who  
look far enough. The farmer, rising  
early and working late, may have no  
great thought reaching up in his mind  
save a moody anticipation of the har-  
vest; but he really stands before the  
face of the great Creator and receives  
from His hand the bread to be dis-  
tributed to the sons of men. The man  
of medicine leads a life of listening  
to complaints and hearing diseases  
described in endless succession. But  
if in his weariness over the monoton-  
ous round he could feel that he was  
a very angel of light and comfort to  
the miserable hypochondriac, that he  
sooths and restores to the tired  
nerves their power so that the full  
life takes up its round again and new  
courage comes with every visit, then  
he would see behind his seemingly  
fruitless life the light of an angel's  
wing.

Indolence to Blame.

Many men and women have march-  
ed to a destroyed eternity through the  
gate of indolence. Indolence invites  
disease. It is contrary to the whole  
law of the natural world, which de-  
pends upon activity. The winds, toss-  
ing the sea foam and whirling in en-  
dless circles, scattering the mountain  
mists and sweeping and dispersing  
the death-damp from the valleys,  
clearing the miasmas of swamps, pur-  
ifying the fetid atmosphere of cities,  
are angels of health and life rushing  
on the swift wings of their uncontroll-  
able currents. When the wind dies  
and the hot sun blisters the helpless  
earth and the leaves are still and  
the green fields nod not in the breeze,  
then the pestilence walketh in dark-  
ness and the destruction wasteth all  
noonday and disease digs deep  
trenches for the dead. Millions die  
of overwork, their life crushed out  
at counters, and work-benches and  
at desks. But multitudes more die  
of indolence, by inactivity con-  
tracting diseases beyond the power  
of all the "pathies" and doctors of  
the world.

Endanger Soul.

Indolence endangers the soul. If  
you want to ruin your children for  
time and eternity, bring them up in  
indolence—the devil will do the rest.  
Satan makes his chief conquests over  
men who have nothing to do. More  
souls are lost through indolence than  
we dream. Goethe saved his Faust  
by finding something useful for him  
to do. "Occupation is the armor of  
the soul." Indolence benumbs the con-  
science, rusts the intellect, eats out  
the life, ruins the soul. It callouses  
the spiritual faculties against the  
forces of divine appeal. Loafers are  
usually infidels. Consummate idlers  
never read the Bible. The religion of  
Jesus Christ is not maligned by busy  
merchants and industrious mechanics,  
but in public lounging-places, given  
up to profruity and vile discourse and  
devilishness. These fellows have no  
sympathy with a book that says, "Let  
him that stole steal no more; but  
rather let him labor, working with his  
hands the thing that is good, that he  
may have to give to him that need-  
eth." Very rarely is an idle man con-  
verted to God. Simon and Andrew  
were converted while fishing, and  
Matthew while collecting the taxes,  
and Lydia while selling purple, and  
the jailer while looking after his pris-  
oners. David was tending his sheep,  
and Gideon was threshing on the  
threshing floor and Amos was among  
the herdmen; and the shepherds of  
Bethlehem watching their flocks heard  
the song of the angels. But no one  
was ever converted or called to any  
high work while he stood wool-gath-  
ering with his hands in his pockets.  
The peasant women of Europe carry-  
ing great weights upon their heads  
are noticeably taller and straighter  
than their favored sisters who bear  
no burdens.

We are impatient at the dull rou-  
tine of life; but the shining orbs of  
heaven declare the routine of God,  
and there is no doubt that life's work  
may be done and its burdens borne  
in such a manner that, instead of be-  
ing meaningless and repellent, its  
most difficult tasks shall make men  
and women grow so strong and erect  
and gracious as to remind us of those  
tall straight angels of God. Ruskin  
says, "Duty done is the soul's fire-  
side." It is a comfortable and bless-  
ed resting-place. There is no hope  
for the idler either in this world or  
in the world to come. He son of God  
owned the universe, for He prepared  
for His work of redemption in the  
shop of Joseph the carpenter. Mrs.  
Browning says:

"Get leave to work  
In this world, 'tis the best you get at  
all."

For God, in cursing giveth better gifts  
Than man in benediction.

Get work, get work; be sure 'tis better  
far

Than what you work to get."

It is possible for a man to make his  
work, whatever it be, his point of at-  
tachment to the life of God, an ex-  
pression of his soul. In his service a  
suit of hodgeen gray becomes a livery  
of cloth of gold. Partnership with  
God lifts up our toil and makes it  
divine. There was Stradivarius, the  
one violin-maker of Cremona,—

"That plain white-aproned man who  
stood at work

Patent and accurate full fourscore  
years,

Cherished his sight and touch by tem-  
perance,

And since keen tense is love of pro-  
fectness

Made perfect violins, and needed  
paths,

For inspiration and high mastery."

Life could not be commonplace to  
him, though working in his dingy  
shop in making instruments from  
which others were to draw the music.  
"No simpler man than he; he never  
cried,

"Why was I born to this monotonous  
task

O' making violins?" Or flung them  
down

To suit with hurling act a well-hurled  
curse

At labor on such perishable stuff."

Not for gold to spend on pleasures  
did he labor, but because these were  
something in his soul that hunged  
for a point of contact with God:—

"Who draws a line and satisfies his  
soul,

Making it crooked where is should be  
straight!"

Spam work can never be a point of  
attachment with the life of the Infinite  
Toller.

"God be praised,  
Antonio Stradivari has an eye  
That winces at false work and loves  
the true,

With hand and arm that play upon  
the tool

As willingly as any singing bird  
Sets him to sing his morning rounde-  
lay.

Because he likes to sing and likes the  
sing."

And when his friend suggests that  
this slavery to the making of such  
good violins will win no fame, no  
masses in the church, and no exemp-  
tion from the fires of purgatory, he  
replies:—

"Twere purgatory here to make  
them ill;

And for my fame—when any master  
holds

"Twixt chin and hand a violin of mine,  
He will be glad that Stradivari lived,  
Made violins, and made them of the  
best."

Antonio had learned the great se-  
cret that work may be worship, be-  
cause it is placing at the disposal of  
God a willing organ of the infinite life.  
So humdrum never for a moment  
brought him discontent, for while God  
gives the masters skill of touch and  
tone,—

"I give them instruments to play upon,  
God choosing me to help him."

And he feels he is doing something  
no other man can do as well, and that  
in the sight of heaven his commenda-  
tion is as great as that of him who  
plays divinely on the instrument.

"My work is mine.

And, hereby or not, if my hand lack-  
ed

I should rob God—since He is fullest  
good.

Leaving a blank instead of violins."

Partner with God! And standing at  
his bench his soul grows true and  
white through the power of that great  
partnership. "An endless significance  
lies in work."

Work Makes Him Partner.

And the meaning is here, that any  
work truly done, done in a eternal  
light, done in a spirit of patience and  
of faith, liberates the divine element  
in the nature of the doer, and makes  
him the organ and partner of God. A  
man who works for God like that will  
work as if he had to live forever.  
Every day he will live as if he had to  
die at set of sun, and when he lies  
down at night in happy and trustful  
weariness the angels of God will  
breathe over him an evening blessing  
and shut to the doors of his ear; till  
at last the weary day of life is over,  
and it rings to even—song—the work  
is done, the rest is prepared for him  
in heavenly mansions, and God giveth  
his beloved sleep.

Friends.

Our friends are our angels.

"A friend is worth all hazards we can  
run.

Poor is the friendless master of a  
world.

A world in purchase of a friend is  
gain."

"You are an angel to me," wrote  
Carlyle to Emerson. A mother's in-  
fluence is a good angel to her boy,  
and she illustrates those words of  
Emerson, when he says, "A true  
friend is somebody who can make  
us do what we can." Friendship is  
a sacred thing. It is a cadence of  
divine melody melting through the  
heart. The truest friend is not he  
who gives us something, but who  
awakens and develops the best with-  
in our souls. There are natures—so  
transcendent and gracious that, if they  
love us, we are conscious that in

them we have a kind of baptism and  
consecration. They bind us to recti-  
tude, they commit us to God, they  
pledge us to heaven, by their pure  
belief about us; and our sins become  
the worst kind of blasphemy against  
their high and hopeful opinions of us,  
a sort of sacrilege which with im-  
plicit hands tears down the invisible  
altar of their holy trust.

Sorrow an Angel.

I name one more angel, Sorrow.

When our friends go, we try to be  
brave, we try to think that our loss  
is their gain, and we try to be willing  
and submissive. But the hurt gets no  
relief as the days go by. The room  
is as empty as ever, and as silent as  
ever, and the ache in the heart is no  
less relentless in its pain. The prime  
solace for sorrow is service. The  
lesson is to think more of others and  
less of self, and by doing thus trans-  
figure our own sadness. Those inner  
rewards of helpfulness and duty done  
will sweeten into an experience full  
of exceeding and gracious repose. Pain  
is translated into peace, and at last  
our happiest memories under the light  
of our consecration to the good of  
others will be those which are light-  
ed by a dead friend's face. Then our  
thought of them will be our heaven-  
spot, and our life, like the fair city of  
the Apocalypse, will have no need of  
sun or moon, for the glory of the  
faces of those that we have helped  
and blessed will lighten it.

There is a story that years ago in  
Switzerland traitors rose up and ban-  
ished from his city and his kingdom  
a noble ruler. In peasant garb he  
went forth to meet the world, a wander-  
er from his own inheritance. As  
time went on men missed their king  
and longed again for his old rule of  
righteousness. And so they sent am-  
bassadors to foreign lands to find  
and bring him back. In a distant  
country they found that he had made  
a name and built a castle, and at  
night the exiled prince heard beneath  
his window the old rude stirring song  
his childhood heard his mother sing  
amid the hills of Switzerland. Emotion  
and tumultuous longing filled his  
soul to look once more upon the mas-  
tastic mountains of his native land.  
And when morning dawned he left his  
castle and, arrayed as a pilgrim, turned  
his face toward the free city among  
the Alps, his home and his rightful  
heritage, whose towers gleamed be-  
fore him as he climbed the foothills.

And so in the soul of every man  
God has a witness, an angel, speak-  
ing of his sonship and his consequent  
inheritance. He hears the echo of  
forgotten voices, and oft in the still-  
ness there are divine melodies, that  
seem to come through the rifts of  
the sky. He hears the home-songs.  
Something stirs strange hopes within  
him. At last the soul opens wide the  
arms to receive death as God's bright-  
est angel. Sorrow turns to singing.  
The foreign exile over, death